Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand

MARCH 2008, ISSUE 34

essons fróm Parachute

What draws 30,000 teenagers?

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#### COMMENT

# Restorative justice: Does it work?



#### Julia Hennessy examines a different approach to crime

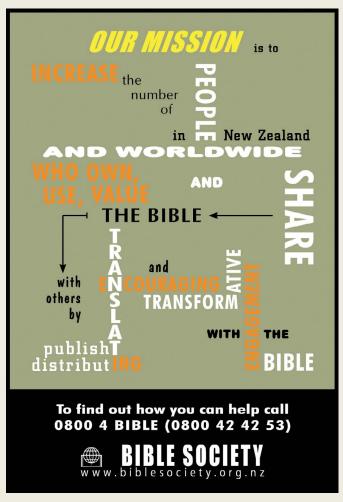
Julia Hennessy

Restorative justice is an approach to resolve crime and other conflict situations. It is an inclusive process. Restorative justice reconstructs traditional notions of crime and how the state or society should respond to it. Restorative justice redefines a crime in relation to people, and acknowledges key people involved in crimes:

"Victims, offenders and communities are all key stakeholders in justice" (Zehr and Mika, 1998)<sup>1</sup>.

There are different restorative justice approaches to meet the needs of different situations. However, they all offer the people who have been most affected by a crime, that is the victim, offender and the community, an opportunity to have a greater say in repairing the harm or damage and resolving any other issues.

It works alongside the formal justice system. This is a tool for making right the wrong, a tool that allows victims of injustice to have a voice and a tool for people to take responsibility for the harm that they have caused to others.



#### How does it work?

Restorative Justice is entirely voluntary so if you do not want to take part you cannot be forced to. It is a means for victims and offenders to communicate with each other; to say what they want to say about the crime, how it affected them and what they want to happen about it. It provides the opportunity for offenders to apologise, make amends for their offending and often provides support to change their behaviour in the future.

The philosophy behind restorative justice is not new. Involving stakeholders in the resolution of an offence has historically been intrinsic in the methods of justice employed by indigenous peoples - for example, Brehon Laws in Ireland and Maori tradition in New Zealand.

Restorative justice providers are usually community- and churchbased groups. They deliver restorative justice processes to many of the Courts across the whole of New Zealand and are also delivering restorative justice processes within schools and workplaces. The use of this model is being developed as a tool in all areas of conflict and relationship management.

#### A snapshot of the process

Seven people are sitting round a table. Only one of these people has met all of these people before. This man is a restorative justice facilitator. His role is to bring people together to have a conversation. However, this is a very sensitive conversation and has to be managed very skilfully.

Mark is 21 years old; he lives apart from his family. He had spent many a time in the past with Grandpa Peri, listening to his stories. They are friends and they have respect for each other.

This had changed. Mark, while out with his friends had got drunk. He had then entered Grandpa Peri's home as a dare. He had stolen some cash and Grandpa's war medal. He had often sat and heard the story about how it had been won. He knew that Grandpa had lost a good many of his friends in the war, and he knew how proud Grandpa was of being awarded the medal.

They are sitting together at a restorative justice meeting. Mark had been to court and pleaded guilty to burglary. He had agreed that he wanted to apologise to Grandpa Peri for what he had done. Grandpa Peri wanted to know what had happened to his medal, and wanted to tell Mark how saddened he was by the boy's actions. A lot of tears are flowing, and words are expressed that are hard to hear.

However, the healing of the restorative justice process brings these two people back to a place in their hearts so that trust and friendship can be restored.

"I am just so pleased that I went to this meeting. I thought it would be a complete waste of time, but it's been brilliant", said Grandpa Peri at the close of the restorative justice conference.

Julia Hennessy has recently become General Manager of FamilyWorks at Presbyterian Support Central. She previously worked at the Ministry of Justice liaising with restorative justice providers across New Zealand, after emigrating from the UK in 2005.

1. Zehr, R and Mika, H. (1998). Fundamental Concepts of Restorative Justice. Contemporary Justice review, Vol. 1, 47-55.

# Spanz

Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand

#### MARCH 2008 Issue 34

#### Who we are

Spanz is published quarterly by the Presbyterian Publishing Company Ltd, PO Box 9049, Wellington, New Zealand

#### ISSN 1175 5202

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#### Next issue

June 2008 Advertising deadline 11 April 2008

#### Design

Tangerine

#### Printing

Lithoprint

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#### **Cover Photograph**

Amanda Wells

#### The Right Rev Pamela Tankersley contributes a regular column to Spanz

# Moderator's musings

I have spent much of the summer in the company of our grandchildren, Harry, Oliver and Juliette – all under four years of age. It's a great privilege to be able to be a real person with a real relationship with them; it's immensely rewarding to engage in conversation, to delight in their learning of new skills and speech, to hear the "OK Grandma" as well as the loud toddler "NO!" It's often unpredictable, messy and exhausting, but I wouldn't miss the opportunity to engage with their nurturing for anything. I choose to partner with the rest of our family in the raising of our children.

I've been musing about how messy church is these days, as we engage in our communities, with real people and situations. It might be much smoother and simpler to follow a set of rules that would nurture a Christian community (in Presbyterian style, with decency and order) without having to worry about all the unpredictability that disrupts our desire to get on with growing mature Christians and active, community serving churches. But being an incarnational, real church will always be messy and probably wearying.

The Catholic Orders use the idea of charism to describe the special nature of their witness and work. I wonder what the charism of our national Church might be. Amongst other things I want to put in a plug for being a Church that enacts partnership - justice-based partnership within the Treaty of Waitangi and within the multi-cultural community in which we are found; flexible ecumenical partnerships - at national and local levels; mission partnership with overseas churches; active partnerships with our communities and with those agencies such as Presbyterian Support who engage in a real way with hurting and stressed people.

It's a high calling, I believe – but a really messy way to be church, because it requires more than mere tolerance of difference: it's much more about mutual respect and just engagement, often questioning our need for power and status and allowing the edges of our identity as Presbyterians to become frayed. In the way of Christ's hospitality, it is about making the agenda of our partners



our real concern because they are like guests who bring us precious gifts. Our Church needs to keep watching for the moment when we can both celebrate the prodigal home and ensure that that older brother is included.

When the small voice by my bed at 5.30 am demands that it gets into my bed, I oblige, but internally groan as I won't get much more sleep. Of course I could see this as an invasion of my space and refuse – but I choose to see it as evidence of a real, loving relationship of trust.

To quote a conversation out of Margery Willams' childrens book the *Velveteen Rabbit:* 

"Real isn't how you are made," said the Skin Horse. "It's a thing that happens to you. When a child loves you for a long, long time, not just to play with, but REALLY loves you, then you become Real." "Does it hurt?" asked the Rabbit. "Sometimes," said the Skin Horse, for he was always truthful. "When you are Real you don't mind being hurt." "Does it happen all at once, like being wound up," he asked, "or bit by bit?" "It doesn't happen all at once," said the Skin Horse. "You become. It takes a long time. That's why it doesn't happen often to people who break easily, or have sharp edges, or who have to be carefully kept. Generally, by the time you are Real, most of your hair has been loved off, and your eyes drop out and you get loose in your joints and very shabby. But these things don't matter at all, because once you are Real you can't be ugly, except to people who don't understand."

A *Christ-centred, community-facing* church is a "real" church, engaging in response to the Gospel in trustworthy, loving partnerships across the spectrum.

May you and your congregation be a real part of your community, in the love of Christ.



he sun beats from a cloud-free sky, turning tents into oversized microwaves and grilling 30,000 young punters. Welcome to Parachute08, where the music is loud but the tone is Godly. Words and pictures by Amanda Wells.

Being embedded in a youth group seemed the best way to capture the Parachute story. My sister-in law Anna, who's part of St Aidan's in Lower Hutt, was taking teenagers Alex, Kate, Nicole and Steph to the music festival, held from 25-28 January at the Mystery Creek showgrounds near Hamilton.

And we were to be part of a wider Presbyterian posse; St John's in the City had planned a tent village in combination with two other Wellington churches, Island Bay and Wadestown, along with the PYM South Island coordinators.

After the long drive, split by overnighting on the way, Friday morning saw our people-mover pulling into Mystery Creek. A little sweet-talking got us driving on site and unloading an ample amount of gear at the prearranged Presbyterian spot. Soon the others arrived and tent construction commenced, hampered somewhat by 30-degree heat and rock-like ground. Farewell, six tent pegs.

Parachute is about music: 170 bands playing on nine stages over three days. But it's also about Christianity and the creation of a safe, youth-oriented environment. No drugs, alcohol or mixed unmarried tenting are allowed. Each morning at 9.30am the "morning meeting" includes a large helping of worship, along with an international Christian speaker and an invitation to commit.

Founder Mark de Jong told a press conference during the festival that more than 2000 people had responded to the altar call on Saturday morning, made by veteran US evangelist Tony Campolo. He had exhorted the gathering to match faith with personal action, particularly in terms of serving those in need: "poverty is the big thing, people." Every individual must respond to the Gospel call, he told the crowd.

The message on Sunday was delivered by another US speaker, Reggie Dabbs, whose tale of birth to a prostitute and personal tragedy was laced with gentle humour. His theme was that everyone, no matter what their background, is worthy in God's eyes. His altar call was followed by the suggestion that people who had brought non-Christian friends should turn to them and encourage them to respond.

The Rev Sharon Ensor, minister of Wadestown Presbyterian, says it's important to give teenagers an opportunity to ask questions after these type of messages. She had eight people in her Parachute party and ran a debriefing session after each morning meeting.

"They have a really good critique. They're not just sponges."

This was the third consecutive year that Sharon has attended Parachute, and she says part of its value is giving kids a sense that they're part of something much bigger than just their church community.

"They get exposed to ideas they might not see at our church, which makes them think."

Paul Ramsay took his three children to Parachute as part of the St John's group, which totalled 40 people. He's been twice and says he's loved each time; both the music and the experience of coming as a group. "It's been neat this year to have number of parishes together."

Like Wadestown, St John's runs small groups after the morning meetings to give the teenagers a chance to reflect on what they have heard, including what they might have felt uncomfortable about.

"We create a safe environment to talk about this. What happens if you go up [to an altar call] and nothing's changed?

"We need to cater for the ones who want to make that kind of commitment but also for the ones who need to be encouraged on their journey."

Teenagers are incisive and astute thinkers, he says. "Never underrate their ability to perceive the message."

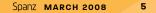
It was interesting to chat to my younger neighbours about their reactions to the messages.

Steph, who was part of the St Aidan's group, says she enjoyed Reggie Dabs because he got the audience involved. But she says people need the chance to make a considered decision about faith. "You want do it when you want to do it. You shouldn't be forced to do it."



us nu-metallers Red

road-tripping



Fellow camper Nicole was impressed by the friendly atmosphere and although she doesn't come from a church background, says she felt comfortable being at Parachute. She was interested in what the different artists had to say onstage, but also says she could see how people might feel pressured to make some kind of Christian commitment.

St John's youth worker Ryhan Prasad was at his fourth Parachute. He says young people can take away a lot of positive things from an event that's outside the Presbyterian tradition. But it's important to create forums for open discussion, he says.

"Parachute provides a lot of questions. It's really good to have leaders there to answer those questions."

He wonders about the long term effect of responding to an altar call on those who aren't hooked into a community, and says St John's is very focused on creating a strong network among its youth.

Ryhan says he tells his youth group members to think about using the worship to look for a connection with God that's different from what they might normally experience at a more formal service. "Sometimes it isn't just about intellectual stuff."

One of the key mainstage acts on Sunday night was Hillsong United, from the eponymous Sydney church. Their performanceoriented slickness made an interesting counterpoint to the lead singer's initial declaration that "it's all about you, Lord; it's not about us". They were followed by gospel act Israel & New Breed, who found more favour with my interviewees.

When asked what has stood out about their Parachute experience, teenagers have a variety of responses, not all focused on the music and the bands.

Charlie of St John's says he's been struck by the huge number of people at the event – which probably peaked close to last year's 27,500. Between 10,000 and 12,000 camped on site, making for long toilet queues and infrequent showers.

Charlie says he thought headliners Switchfoot were "pretty average", sounding "like listening to a CD" rather than being a captivating live performance.

Others concurred: Tom says Switchfoot were "alright" but not as good as their hype; he thought last year's festival was better. Tom was also struck by the scale of corporate sponsorship at the event – the presence of Vodafone, TV channel C4 and radio station The Edge was hard to miss.

Wellington rappers Rapture Ruckus were a highlight, Tom says, and the St Aidan's girls agree. Kate says she doesn't usually like rap because of its focus on "pimps and girls," but she really enjoyed Rapture Ruckus. Nicole says they were one of the stand-out acts. "Rapture Ruckus really got the crowd going." She also liked my personal favourites US rock act Red.

Fellow camper Alex says she liked Australian singer songwriter Katy Ray, who played on one of the secondary stages. Alex will also remember the heat: temperatures topped 30 degrees every day, making for an at-times overwhelmingly too-hot experience. The open mainstage got the full force of the sun, although other indoor venues offered more respite.

The overwhelmingly teenage crowd featured an intriguing array of styles, ranging from Christian slogan t-shirts ("G-sus wears jeans") to more alternative emo looks, complete with black leather and

piercings. Kate says it was interesting to see people who "normally you would be scared of", if you saw them in the street, as part of a friendly, diverse crowd. "It was a really good atmosphere, really friendly."

Matt, from the St John's group, says he was struck by the environment; "that you could feel safe walking around at 2 o'clock in the morning without getting assaulted". However, he was getting sick of the Parachute "mad men" waking campers up at 7am by driving round with loudspeakers.

Sleep was somewhat scarce at Parachute. The main stages resounded till midnight, when groups of teenagers started to wander around talking loudly and singing. This continued for some hours and seemed to start up again at 5am.

Nicole says she'll always remember waking up at 3 o'clock in the morning to hear a group of guys singing "I don't want to miss a thing".

But while adults looked bleary eyed, teenagers seemed to tap into hidden stores of energy, with plenty of action in the mosh pit.

During Australian indie rock band Jonezzetta on Saturday night, Nicole was only four people back from the front of the mainstage, which she described as a fun if intense experience; too intense for Alex, who had to seek less crowded ground. Later there was plenty of pushing going on during headliners Switchfoot, with some of the younger teenagers feeling overwhelmed by the packed-in, jumping crowd.

Anna says the vibe was different from last year, with the number of teenagers obviously there for Switchfoot making the crowd more diverse.

She says she enjoyed her second Parachute experience: "it's awesome to see that Christianity is relevant to so many people. That it's normal and it's actually cool."

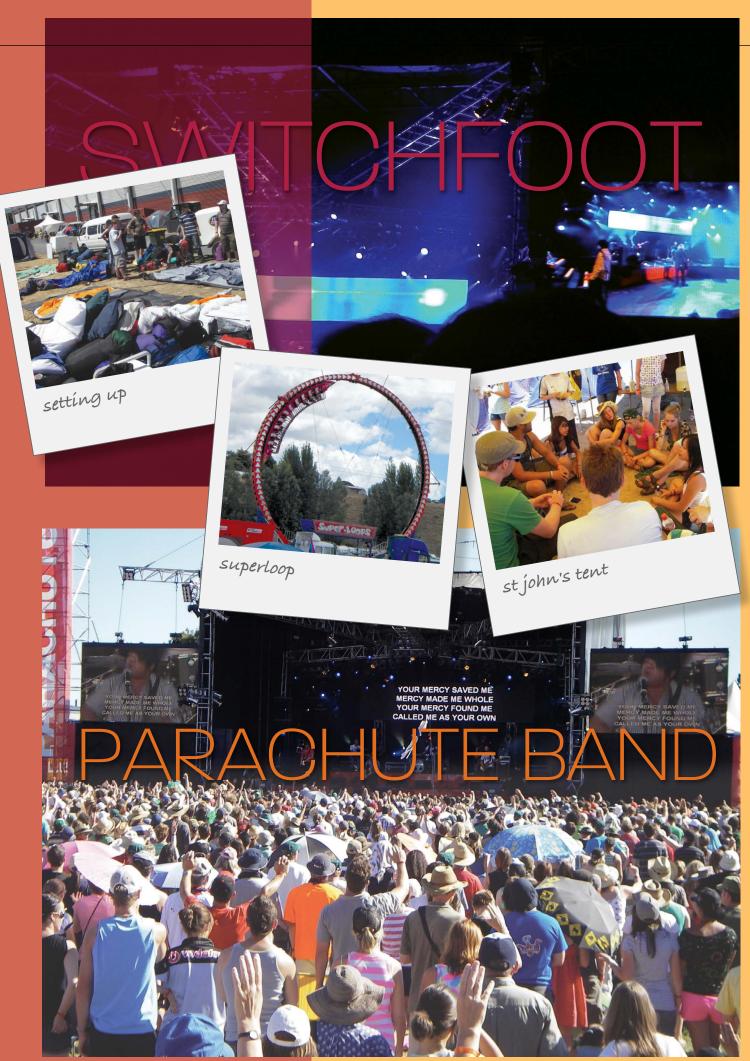
Hawkes Bay minister Howard Carter took his family to the event, and says he enjoyed seeing the huge amounts of young people at a Christian event. He'd like to see the institutional Church learning from the festival's success in targeting secular youth.

"Parachute says we must invest in young people on the other side of the cultural barrier."

This year's festival thankfully lacked the Sunday-night deluge of 2007, which saw many campers evacuated to the mainstage area. Instead, we had four days of baking sun, producing a dust that infiltrated every inch of your tent and coated feet in a disturbing fake tan. Packing up, we looked forward to a sterilising shower and the silence of a real room with walls, roof and no stereo. Well, the adults did. But I'd guess from the singing sessions on the way home that Parachute will continue to draw its crowd, young and old, with equal enthusiasm.

Media coverage of the event focused either on the oddity of an alcohol-free festival or the appeal to parents of a safe environment for their kids. Not on the Christian content or message; a fact of perpetual irritation to its organisers, I suspect.

It might not be a font of theological depth, but for those four days Mystery Creek becomes a place where Christianity is the norm and teenagers who've never been exposed to the Gospel can't avoid it. For those still preaching the secularisation of our society, it's a must-see event.



# Fronting up - Steve Millward

#### [Steve is one of the North Island co-ordinators for PYM]

#### What does your role/work involve?

Making Jesus known! That is the vision of Presbyterian Youth Ministry and it pumps! This involves:

- » networking: phoning, visiting, the Connect conference, Faithfests
- » leadership training: Beach Mission at the Mount 28 Dec – 01 Jan, Faithfest Roadshow Worship Workshop
- » resourcing: helping people be aware of our youth library, our Fuel publication, Connect, and other youth resources.....
- » advocacy: helping where I can

#### Why did you choose this ministry?

Young people have energy and it all just followed on from the local youth work and the Faithfests we had been organising here at Crossroads. One thing leads to another...

## What have you learned about God through this work?

God wants us to get out of the boat and walk on water!

## What is the most exciting thing about being involved in it?

I love the vision. And it is an awesome opportunity to be a part of a bigger picture. I have a heart for our denomination/ movement and desire to help identify, mentor, and encourage new and veteran leaders to go on making Jesus known, win people for Jesus, and ultimately help grow our denomination/movement.

# What have been the biggest challenges?

Believing God wants to do immeasurably more than all we ask or think according to His power at work in us. He really does!

Communication of the vision, but I am relatively new in this role, so that will happen.

Getting us all to believe we can do more together than alone. Let's use our connections to grow our Church and positively impact New Zealand and the world.

#### Who has inspired you?

Ruth, my wife, and our amazing grown up kids; David Watson; John and Carol Balchin; my Dad and Mum; and anyone who has had to battle for what they have achieved. I love it when the underdog wins against the odds.

## Where to from here/what are your future plans?

I believe PYM can help move our denomination from survival to revival, from head down to head up, from losing to winning. We have sown and too often others have reaped on our behalf. It's time



for us to do some reaping. The giant is awakening! Let's go take some land for God! (I speak metaphorically, of course)

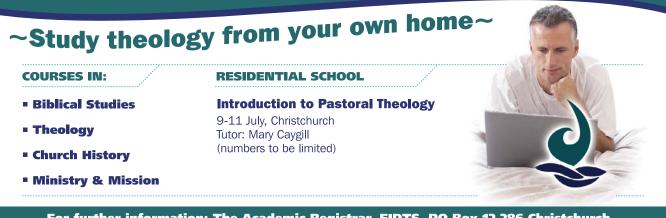
## Do you have any recommended books/CDs?

Leadership Next by Eddie Gibbs, Leading Congregational Change by Jim Herrington, Courageous Leadership by Bill Hybels, and I could go on. Stand up and Shout It: Kiwi Success Unplugged is inspirational, books by Lance Armstrong, Les Miserables by Victor Hugo, and anything by Leon Uris, Anthony Grey, and Herman Wouk; The Caine Mutiny is all about how not to do leadership!

## Where can I learn more about what you do?

Check out www.presbyterian.org.nz/youth and www.faithfest.org.nz Spanz

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# Adventure programme

To go on one of their adventures "you must be older than someone you know", says St David's Richmond's seniors ministry organiser Alex Johnston.

The programme started off as something for the church's own seniors, but now attracts a wider age group including people from mostly outside the church, he says.

The offer of a van to transport people was the catalyst for the adventures ministry. When it became available, Alex decided to take a group of the church's elderly people up to Rainbow Ski field near Nelson, and on the way home they stopped at Lake Rotoiti, where one of the participants, Martha, asked if Alex could organise a ride on the lake's water taxi. After that, Alex asked if she'd like a helicopter ride. And he says the ministry, which was initially known as the "Martha and Betty Adventure group", after the two 75-year-old adventure-seeking women who inspired him to take the idea further, snowballed from there.

Initially the adventures utilised Alex's own experience working for the Department of Conservation with the likes of mountain walks, but trips soon got more adventurous as more volunteers and local organisations got on board. Recent trips have included hot air balloon rides, cruises on Nelson harbour, helicopter rides, and sailing around the Marlborough Sounds.

As well as the parish volunteers who're involved, good relationships with local organisations who offer their services at a discount have also been key to keeping the ministry going.

"You only get people to Christ by building a relationship with them," says Alex, who believes contacting people via mailbox drops and the like aren't the best way to go. "It must be face-to-face, or you're wasting your time."

During the start-up phase, getting to know those in the neighbourhood around the parish on a personal level was critical, he says. Through earlier ministry initiatives like delivering flowers or distributing calendars to locals, he built up a good knowledge of where elderly people lived. So when it came to finding people who might be interested in the adventures, it was easy enough to call into the homes and invite them along.

They also "market" the adventures to the people who attend a fortnightly showing of a contemporary movie at St David's.

# lures elderly

Standing out



A Nelson fair showcasing services for the elderly has also been an important means of getting people involved. At the fair, people were asked to write down the sort of adventures they would like to go on, and Alex now uses the information they provided to target the people who have expressed an interest in a particular type of adventure.

The ministry is self-funding, with people paying to go on the adventures, says Alex, who, along with a team of committed volunteers, organises all the outings, putting in about 30-40 hours a week (collectively) to make things happen. Giving time is critical, he says. They aim for nine trips per year, avoiding the summer holiday season when tourist operators are busy.

One of the unexpected challenges for Alex was a lack of commitment to ministry with the elderly from those within church leadership. Because of this, it was harder to build buy-in within the congregation for the ministry.

But Alex and his volunteer team persevered with the ministry, which has now been going for eight years. Sharing the Good News is what it's all about for Alex, who says his vision for the ministry is to "see lost people come back to Christ". Alex was surprised to find that many of the elderly people going on the adventures had been hurt by the church at some stage in their life, and his hope is that through love – which in this case involves providing fellowship, listening, and giving of time – that these people can find their way back to a loving relationship with God.

There are around 50 people who attend the movie screenings/adventures and who receive a devotional booklet once every three months. Alex says it's all part of bringing God's word to those who might not otherwise hear it.

#### By Jose Reader Spanz

\*This story comes from the magazine developed for the "Standing out in your community" project. See p11 for more information.



# Eating breakfast at church

The Rev Barry Kelk says "Breakfast at the Coronation Hall" on Sunday mornings began as "just regular people with a passion to do church differently".

"I literally had a dream where I was shown that I was to drop my nets on the other side of the road." He spent a year talking through the dream with his church (the Highgate Mission), the people who would become the B@TCH team, and Highgate's then-minister the Rev Martin Stewart. Giving it time was really important, Barry says. "If we had rushed off, it if would have not started well." During this time there was a lot of prayer, planning and consultation.

After another six months, parish council signed off the project. If they had said "no", Barry says, the project would not have gone ahead; "this cannot be born out of rebellion." Barry and his family had been part of the church for 50 years.

By giving permission for B@TCH to be planted, Highgate took the risk it would lose key people, but the memberships of both churches have grown and are growing. Initially Highgate paid the cost of hall hire and food for B@TCH, and gave 15 people to be the congregation. "We sent them back in six months."

B@TCH was also paying its own way within six months, and sending money back to the "mothership" within a year.

One difference from a conventional church is the lack of formal collection during the service. "We don't have offerings; we just have a bucket at the door." But the generosity of his congregation has surprised Barry.

As well as covering venue and food costs, they have assisted students on missions to a Nelson beach project, Thailand and Nepal for the summer.

Now in its fourth year, B@TCH pays Barry for 13 hours a week. He also runs a photography business and says starting a venture like this inevitably costs at a personal level, in terms of time taken away from paid work.

Barry says all the leaders' strong community connections have been vital; people need to be involved, on committees and live in the area. Barry had been on the school's Board of Trustees and taught Bible in schools for many years.

But people are coming from all around the city, he says, which has been somewhat surprising.

Another surprise has been the number of young people, including those coming from the two nearby boarding schools. "Rumour has it that some even sneaked out to attend."

The ratio of men to women is 45:55, which is unusually even; and the age range is from babies to 80 years old.

B@TCH is "all age worship the whole time". Its integration of children plus the opportunity to feed them simultaneously has proved a big draw card for people with young families who otherwise find the logistics of Sunday-morning church too hard.

Barry sends an email every Thursday night that gives the text for the service and any notices, which "cuts down on time wasted during



the service". "It is vital that services finish on time so families can plan their day!"

He says they try hard to do everything possible to lessen any tensions people have.

Instead of being inside the building, greeters stand in the street and learn people's names immediately. The leadership team have a 12-second rule – one of them must approach a new person within this time. The food is near the door, so that people can spend time picking this up before they need to decide where to sit or who to talk to.

"With a cup or plate in hand, it breaks down the barriers."

Breakfast is "best-ever" fruit salad, cereals, chocolate croissants, bran muffins, fruit and French bread, along with plunger coffee, with all purchasing done fresh on the Sunday morning. "It's not expensive to do if you buy in bulk."

B@TCH spent its first eight months with little or no sung music; then started introducing the familiar hymns people might have sung at school, gradually incorporating new songs.

One question the leadership team has been wrestling with is how long they keep B@TCH's seeker-friendly vision going, especially when people in the congregation start to want more meat or substance. Barry says they have committed to maintaining this approach for at least the next year. "I always look to the back door and think if a stranger walked in, would they feel welcome, understand the language and be able to apply it tomorrow."

Meat is supplied in home groups, which include teaching and pastoral care.

B@TCH will probably outgrow its hall within 12 months, Barry says, and he thinks 150 people is probably as big as this type of congregation should get. They've started thinking about what will happen next; perhaps planting something totally new, again in conjunction with Highgate.

Barry has become a Local Ordained Minister and says he has enjoyed the support received from the School of Ministry during his study.

He says one of the most important things about B@TCH is that it's fun. "Humour is a huge part of it; a lot of laughter and a lot of tears."

"Church can be just as worshipful, respectful and meaningful out of pews.

"This thing in the hall is church."

\* This story comes from the magazine developed for the "Standing out in your community" project. See p11 for more information.



More than 400 people have registered for the "Standing out in your community" workshops that we're running between February and June. At these interactive workshops you'll receive resources designed to encourage and inspire your local mission work and help your church improve its community profile.

Below are the dates and times of each workshop, chosen to suit the majority of respondents. If you haven't registered for the workshop but would still like to attend, **please get in touch** as I will be accepting more registrations up to 14 March.

Graduates from the School of Ministry

at the end of last year have secured

a variety of placements. The school

is now known as the Knox Centre for

Ministry and Leadership, with the first

intake of students for the internship-

based programme starting this year.

Amanda Wells Communications Manager amanda@presbyterian.org.nz (04) 381-8285

Dunedin	East Taieri	Wednesday 20 February, 12.15pm-3pm
Cromwell	Cromwell	Tuesday 4 March, 6.45pm-9.30pm
Gore	Calvin	Wednesday 5 March, 6.45pm-9.30pm
Nelson	St David's Richmond	Tuesday 18 March, 6.45pm-9.30pm
Blenheim	Wairau Valley	Wednesday 19 March, 6.45pm-9.30pm
Wellington	Wadestown	Monday 31 March, 6.45pm-9.30pm
Palmerston North	St David's	Tuesday 1 April, 6.45pm-9.30pm
Napier	St John's Hastings	Monday 14 April, 12.15pm-3pm
Gisborne	St Andrew's	Tuesday 15 April, 6.45pm-9.30pm
Auckland 1	St Columba at Botany	Wednesday 14 May, 6.45pm-9.30pm
Auckland 2	Somervell	Thursday 15 May, 12.15pm-3pm
Whangarei	St Andrew's	Friday 16 May, 12.15pm-3pm
Christchurch	Knox	Wednesday 28 May, 12.15pm-3pm
Greymouth	Greymouth Uniting	Thursday 29 May, 6.45pm-9.30pm
Hamilton	Discovery Christian Centre	Monday 9 June, 6.45pm-9.30pm
Tauranga	St Peter's	Thursday 12 June, 9.15am-12pm

#### The 2007 graduates from the Dunedinbased ordination studies programme have found the following placements:

**Douglas Bradley:** Minister, Glendowie Presbyterian Church, Glendowie, Auckland

Kevin Finlay: Minister, St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Howick, Auckland

Stuart Simpson: Global Mission Office & St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Otahuhu, Auckland

Mele Tavelia: Chaplain to Pacific Island Women, Auckland Hospital, Auckland

**Rob Pendreigh:** Minister, Kaitaia Union Parish, Kaitaia

Anne Thomson: Yet to be placed

#### Graduates from the distance learning ordination studies programme have the following placements:

Darryl Tempero: Assistant Minister, Hornby Presbyterian Community Church, Christchurch

Christine Sorensen: Yet to be placed

#### These Locally Ordained Ministers have completed the pathway to National Ordained Ministry:

Karl Lamb: Minister, Te Anau Presbyterian Church, Te Anau

Nancy Parker: Minister, Waiareka-Weston Presbyterian Parish, North Otago

#### OC Books shuts down

"It's the end of a long Christian literature strand for Dunedin," Otago Christian Bookshop Trust member Allan Paulin says. He was commenting on the decision, made by the trust early in January, to close OC Books. Set up in the mid-1970s as a joint project between the Presbyterian and Anglican churches, the Otago Christian Bookshop replaced the long-established Presbyterian Bookroom. In the 1990s, "a more modern name", OC Books, was chosen. At the beginning of December 2007, shop manager Glenn Peoples sent an email newsletter to the 800 people on OC Books' electronic mailing list breaking the news of impending closure, although a formal decision to close had not been made at that point. With more than 60 per cent of sales being electronic, consideration was given to moving OC Books from its central Dunedin location in Lower Stuart St. "We looked at the possibility of being a warehouse, a mini-Amazon or something like that [but] we didn't think that was viable either," Allan told Spanz after the trust meeting. The likelihood that many people were "moving away from serious Christian reading" may have had some bearing on declining sales. For several years, OC Books shared premises and expenses with secondhand bookshop Rebound, whose owner John Needham said he had chosen to close rather than relocate. Legal firm Webb Farry, which has premises adjacent to OC Books, had spoken to Otago Christian Bookshop Trust representatives about taking over the lease but at the time of going to press, negotiations were still in progress. A former long-serving manager of OC Books, Mike Crowl, who resigned in 2006, has recently become an employee of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand's National Mission Team, based in Dunedin. **By Gillian Vine** 

# Book Reviews

# Fighting Globesity: A practical guide to personal health and global sustainability.

#### Phillip and Jackie Mills, MD.

Random House New Zealand, \$34.99

#### **Reviewed by Spencer Clubb**

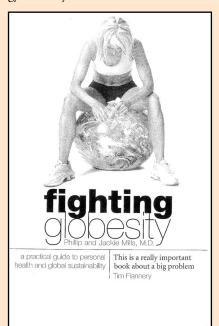
I was sceptical about the value of reading this book given the apparently tenuous link between personal fitness and global sustainability. However, if climate change guru Tim Flannery was willing to put his endorsement on the cover I decided it couldn't be that bad.

The first third of the book is about keeping fit. Or, perhaps more accurately, about getting fit. The target audience – middle-aged, post-family, suburban housewives who may have let things go a bit over the last decade. The authors tread a delicate line between encouraging exercise, team sports, goal setting and cross training, and recommending their own gym membership and training programmes. In fact, page references to "Les Mills classes and programmes" appear almost as often as "global warming" in the index. Nevertheless, I found this first section to be full of sensible ideas about "getting back on the horse" and getting fit again. Gym or no gym.

The second part of the book is about eating your way to better health. There are tips on how much to eat, what kinds of food are good and bad for you and a very interesting section on food and micronutrients as natural medicine. This section of the book also creates an interest in the global food system and presents a more persuasive link between personal health and global sustainability than the first part of the book.

The final third of the book completes the story, with chapters on climate, energy, waste and water. I found these sections to be informative, clearly written and well researched, although I was irritated by the book's constant claims about what "research shows" without giving any actual references.

The last chapter includes a large number of suggestions for making changes to our lives, our businesses and our cities. Although by no means a weighty tome, if you want some straightforward advice on how to improve your health and wellbeing, increase your understanding of sustainability and take some steps towards making planet Earth a better place, then this book is for you. You may even end up becoming a gym-bunny!



#### Healing Headaches: A New Zealand Guide.

#### Dr Jim Bartley FRACS.

Random House New Zealand, 2007, \$34.99

#### **Reviewed by Amanda Wells**

Written by an Auckland surgeon after years of experience treating sufferers, and coupled with a willingness to think laterally about solutions and causes, *Healing Headaches* offers an empowering and holistic approach that even makes space for prayer.

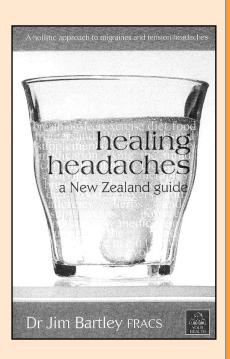
Ear, nose and throat surgeon Jim Bartley is a senior lecturer at Auckland Medical School and works at the Auckland Regional Pain Service. He is also a gifted writer, with the ability to explain complex phenomena in a non-intimidating manner.

The book is subtitled "managing migraines and tension headaches" and

after considering the different causes of headaches Bartley offers several avenues by which relief can be found. I found his chapter on the ways in which we breathe when stressed set up muscle tension in the neck and jaw illuminating. It's a useful read not only for headache sufferers but for anyone experiencing the physical effects of stress.

In a chapter entitled "using the mind", Bartley discusses the power of prayer and explicitly acknowledges the important role spirituality plays in a person's health. "Prayer could also be considered an active pain coping behaviour, and can be a valuable pain intervention."

Other chapters include understanding different types of headaches, the stress response, sleep, nutrition, posture, medication and complementary therapies. *Healing Headaches* is a very readable guide to pain that affects the lives of many in our community and would be a valuable addition to any church or personal library.



# Gearing up for GA08

"Reformed and Reforming" will be the theme for General Assembly 2008, says Moderator Designate the Rev Graham Redding. He says the theme centres on shared identity and direction. "It is about the core beliefs that inform the life and mission of the Presbyterian Church in an increasingly pluralistic world."

Emphasising these beliefs is especially important during a time of rapid change, Graham says. "It's also about how we relate the reality of organisation change with theological convictions about the nature of the Church and the work of the Spirit."

General Assembly 2008 will be held in Wellington at St Patrick's College, Silverstream, from Thursday 2 October to Monday 6 October. Key issues under discussion are expected to include the consideration of a new Focal Identity Statement and a growth strategy for the Church.

Special international guests will be present from the Church of North India, which has significant historical links with the mission work of Kiwi Presbyterians, including at Jagadhri Hospital and St Thomas School.

The work of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand in North India started in 1909, when Dr W J Porteous began a hospital project. This shifted in 1911 to Jagadhri and he was soon joined by other missionaries, with the school opening in 1912. Graham says GA08 will mark the beginning of the centenary celebrations of Dr Porteous' arrival in the Punjab.

The Indian connection will be strengthened by the gown that Graham will wear, which belonged to former missionary the Very Rev J L Grey, who like Graham was a minister of Somervell Church and also a former Moderator (1953), as well as having been Moderator of the Church of North India (1959).

Global Mission Enabler the Rev Andrew Bell says people started talking about the North India centenary in 2005, with "lots

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of energy" around the Church to hold significant celebrations. "It's a massive story and it's well worth telling."

He says enthusiasts have started planning archival projects, including an historical publication, restoration of film and a photographic display, as well as a special fundraising effort for the work in Jagadhri. The plan is for these displays to move around the country, with regional celebrations in a number of centres. If you'd like to be involved, contact Andrew at the Global Mission Office for more information.

Andrew says the three representatives from the Church of North India who attend GA08 will spend an hour on the Sunday morning presenting their stories.

Plans are underway to arrange dinner for the special guests with the Governor General.

Andrew says he would also like to have the General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar attend. By the time of GA08, the Global Mission Office hopes to have raised \$100,000 through the Moderator's appeal for the country, which began at GA06.



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## To incorporate or not to incorporate?

Doug Langford outlines some useful guidelines around incorporation of church activities.

I have been asked on a number of occasions whether a particular activity should be set up within an incorporated organisation or not. The answer is generally that it can be set up within the prescribed Church functions but this is not always obvious.

The Church is well organised. The procedures are well documented. The Book of Order is quite prescriptive. The structures are quite implicit.

Ultimately the responsibility for all of the activities of the Parish falls under the governance of the church council (the session or board or managers). The church council cannot abrogate their responsibilities and have to accept the ultimate responsibility for all matters that are carried out in the name of the parish.

Yes, the church council can delegate specific tasks to a group or committee and they can appoint persons to that group. Equally they can appoint replacement persons. The committee can be set up to complete a particular task or to maintain a particular function. The role of the committee can be changed as circumstances change – it can have a stable mandate or one that is changed to suit the emerging situation.

The circumstances that I have outlined are typical of the life of a committee. The members of the committee have one objective and that is to serve the church council that has appointed them. I shall call this the parish model.

The alternative is to set up a trust and formally create a separate entity, normally by way of incorporation. This can be done also by the setting up of a company and, where it is for a function of the church, set it up in such a way that it has charitable status. For the purposes of this discussion, we shall simply treat either type as one and the same thing (although there are differences between them).

Where do the differences between the parish model and separate trusts lie? A separate entity is required to have a constitution - a set of rules by which it operates. The constitution will normally set down the procedure for the appointment and retirement of trustees and the term of their appointments. There is generally more control in a situation where the parish appoints the members of the trust for a finite term. However, some appointments are not for any stated term and do not come

up for review. Because trustees are required to use their judgment in all situations and effectively cannot be directed how to act, situations can arise where the trustees act in a way that is prejudicial to the parish. Is this really desirable? I think not.

The situation in respect of land holdings is somewhat different from most trustee functions. Also generally the holding of land is a long-term function and it is not generally convenient to keep changing the trustees for land. Because trusts cannot be registered in respect of land, land has to be registered in a way that requires formal registration. The Presbyterian Church Property Act 1885 set up the mechanism for the ownership of Church property and applies to land situated north of the Waitaki River. The Otago Foundation Trust Board has similar functions in respect of land situated south of the Waitaki River. The consequence of registering land in the name of personal trustees is that the trustees change over time and it can be both very time consuming and expensive to update the trusteeship when dealing in the land is contemplated and the registered trustees have moved out of the area or have died. So why would you place the church in this situation?

I have seen some situations where it is claimed that a separate entity is required. This has been cited in respect of a preschool where funding is provided by the Ministry of Education. My experience is that this claim has arisen as a result of a misunderstanding of the structure of the parish and when the structure has been explained, the Ministry of Education has accepted the parish model as fully satisfactory and has funded it accordingly.

The advent of the registration requirements of the Charities Commission has brought yet a further perspective to these issues. The model that the Presbyterian Church has adopted is one where the registration of the presbytery is all-inclusive and extends to cover all of the activities of each of the parishes listed by them. It follows that separately incorporated activities require their own registration – simply another responsibility that is avoided when the parish model is used.

Therefore on balance, the parish model has proven to be robust. It places the responsibility firmly and fairly with the church council, precisely where it should be and in a way that ensures that the church council remains in control.

I cannot see any good reason why the parish model should not be the preferred model in almost every situation.

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# Value relics before they are lost

Failing to appreciate our historical objects can lead to neglect and even theft, as an exploration of church history shows.

"I am sure that as you cultivate this fascinatingly interesting field you will exclaim as we have done time and time again, 'why, oh, why was this not done sooner'. But regrets of this sort are useless and vain unless... they stimulate us to lose no further time or opportunity."

Quoting these prophetic words in 1926, the Christchurch Presbytery "Historical Committee", provided the lead by asking for donations of records and relics. What relics, if any, were given we have been unable to establish.

"...we have communicated with every Presbytery and charge in the Church, and ... there is considerable advance generally in safeguarding of the Church's records and relics"

So reads the first 1928 Assembly report of the Presbyterian Church "Historical Records Committee". Unfortunately, the appreciation and collection of relics then appears to have become secondary to paper records. Despite generally heightened awareness of fire safety and security, the whereabouts and significance of many historical objects continued to be sadly neglected.

In 1936, the most that the committee convener, the Rev D D Scott, could write on the subject was: "It is felt that some of the older Communion vessels are allowed, in certain instances to deteriorate".

In 1946, the Committee itself purchased and restored an historic engraving of John Knox administering the first Protestant sacrament in 1547. Presumably hung in the Church office, its whereabouts is now unknown.

And what became of the Rev J D Gordon's blood-stained "Acts of the Apostles" that the missionary had been using when martyred at Erromanga in 1872, being last mentioned in 1942?

But why should we be concerned? The significance and location of many long-forgotten, historically valuable objects has often only been discovered through chance



comments found in old records. In 1962, an exhortation to parishes to "investigate the whereabouts and condition of... objects of historic interest" still fell short of actually asking for specific details.

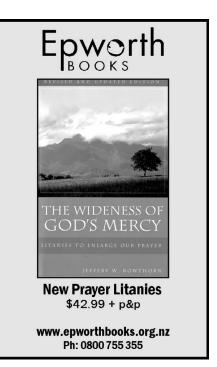
Unfortunately, the value of some objects has led to "targeted" thefts. Known examples of great sentiment include a display collection of valuable communion tokens and the Rev Thomas Burns' chair! Too much attention drawn to an item can also prove a distinct disadvantage.

Occasionally, significant objects of great value have subsequently come to light. A finely engraved sterling silver trowel presented to the Rev Bannerman at the laying of the Dunedin North Presbyterian Church foundation stone in 1899 later found its way to Scotland. Many years later, feeling that it was better placed in New Zealand, his family sent it back to relatives here who generously presented it to the congregation.

Too often relics have ended up in private hands through parish disinterest. This can be a disadvantage if such items are not appreciated or their historical association is subsequently forgotten.

That an attractive presentation trowel has only just been purchased by a local congregation for a significant price against "spirited" bidding shows that sheer value can now override any historical sentiments held by the owner. We need to continually appreciate historic relics within our midst, both in regards to sentiment, value and security. All historical items, including old communion vessels, clocks, communion tokens, and presentation items, should be recorded and photographed. The Archives would gratefully receive copies of their history and photographs.

By Donald Cochrane Spanz



# Students graduating from the School of Ministry ir



My name is Nick McLennan; I'm married to Marie and have two daughters, Alisha (8) and Nasia (5). I was a builder in Wellington before moving down to Dunedin to train for ministry. I believe a key responsibility of the Church is to introduce people to Jesus Christ. I have a passion for seeing people come to faith and continue growing in response to God's call on their lives.



I am Korean and married with two adult children, a son and a daughter. I have a good working knowledge of the English language. My passions are evangelism and healing, and I also enjoy preaching and pastoring people. I have a deep love for the Church and desire to help struggling churches to be revived and am very contented with New Zealand.



We believe that God has a particular concern for those on the margins of society, and this is where our passion for ministry lies. While travelling, we have been inspired by the presence of the Church in some of the world's "hard places". The opportunity to serve the Church in New Zealand excites us, and we are particularly interested in opportunities to work in low-income communities: Julie in her vocation as a high-school teacher, and Jono working with the local church.



Vanessa and I grew up in the Presbyterian Church, so we both appreciate some of the really valuable things in the Church's heritage. We also recognise the need for fresh ideas and the courage to make them happen, rather than simply maintaining the status quo. We're excited about the possibility of journeying with a parish in this direction.



In the end my corporate life got squeezed out by ecclesiastical excitement, and so Naomi and I were off to Dunedin for me to fully respond to God's call into ordained ministry! Stunning educational opportunities and stimulating experiences have opened up the wonders of prayer, tradition, robust theological expression, preaching, and liturgy in the task of interpreting the living Word afresh for our time. Having just had our first baby we are excited about the new beginnings God is bringing our way. We are listening out for a call to a parish that is looking for a minister to share the journey of what it means to walk with Jesus.



Hi I'm Phyll, I'm married to Trevor and we have four children Scott, Andrea, Laura, Rachel (Laura and Rachel in the photo) and one delightful granddaughter. My heart is to serve God and the people He calls me to using the gifts He has blessed me with, particularly in the areas of mission, preaching, pastoral care and prayer, to foster a community church where:

- » God is worshipped and the healing, redeeming power of Christ can be at work.
- » People are discipled and released into using their gifts.
- » There is active involvement in the local community; and openness to the mission opportunities found there.



Hi! I'm excited about the possibility of getting back into parish ministry after many years of study and parenting. I started out in youth ministry (mostly for the Methodists), did the Playcentre thing when our boys were small, trained as a counsellor, and am now into my last year of training as a Presbyterian minister. My husband Chris is an Army Chaplain at Linton, so I am looking for a part-time ministry position in the Manawatu. I'm keen to help the church reach out to children and families, but I'm open to whatever God calls me to.

## Ministers cautiously embrace *DIOQQINQ*

#### Kiwi Presbyterian ministers are venturing into the blogsphere, posting thoughts and sermons online on dedicated websites.

Blogs are online diaries on which readers can post comments, with an exponential growth in their popularity meaning more than 100 million blogs are now in existence worldwide.

They've become increasingly popular in theological circles. "It's a forum for interaction," the Rev Fyfe Blair says.

The minister of Highgate Presbyterian Church, in Dunedin, Fyfe started blogging shortly after he came to New Zealand from Scotland in 2004.

"When I started, I wanted it to be a reflection on some of the things I was engaged in, in mission.

"It was also a means to keep in touch with people in Scotland and elsewhere," he says.

His Beyond Flatland site - the name comes from a book by a 19th century mathematician - at http://fyfeblair.blogspot.com was set up using a free template and Fyfe uses the site to put Highgate's special services online as well as his reflections. "It's not a diary, though. I'm not into that," he says.

The Rev Martin Stewart, minister of St Stephen's Church, Fendalton, Christchurch, has a blog at http://marttherev.blogspot.com

Martin says he used to send out a weekly email, from which he got "a lot more feedback", but switched to blogging as a "less intrusive" medium.

"It's a good way of articulating things that are going on and influencing you," he says of blogging.

Like Fyfe, he uses Blogspot.

"Blogspot is the best one. It's free and has a variety of templates and it's very simple to use."

Marttherev has links to other blogs and websites, including that of St Stephen's.

"Most weeks, my sermon goes on the church website," he says.

With most ministers using the three-year lectionary, reading sermons others have posted is a useful tool in getting a new angle on a Biblical text, he says, adding that he hopes his contributions will help other ministers.

Other links include one to the Naked Pastor, whose transparency is breath-taking. "He just spills the beans on what he's thinking," Martin says.

For "emergent church stuff" that generates a lot

of interaction, he recommends Baptist minister Steve Taylor's site at www.emergentkiwi.org.nz

Of his own approach, Martin says: "I'm a bit nervous about the amount of private information that I release on the web, including opinions that are still being formed."

And unlike the email newsletter, he has "absolutely no idea" how many people read it.

As Fyfe observes, blogs are not without their dangers.

"With some blogs, people decide to call it a day, I think because it can start to drive and consume them.

"The real danger is it can take you away from doing things that are core to ministry," he says.

Mr Stewart agrees, adding that people who want to use a blog as a mission tool need to consider the time involved.

"The more people interact, the more it [your blog site] is going to come up on Google.

"If people are interacting and you don't respond, they'll be annoyed.

"Have you got time to respond?"

\* Want to check out some other blogs? Go to www. futurechurch.org.nz which has links to more than a dozen and also instructions for setting up your own blog. By Gillian Vine Spanz

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# Going back to Papua New Guinea

I returned to Papua New Guinea last year, 28 years after we left in 1979. We had worked with the United Church for 11 years in coastal Papua and I needed to go back to see old friends, catch up with developments and take our youngest daughter Cathy back to see where she was born and to visit our son Robert's grave.

We had arrived in the Delta country with three children, Karen (five years old), Lynnette (four) and Stephen (six months). Our first child conceived and born at Kapuna, Catherine, was born in 1969 with cerebral palsy; Robert, born in 1973, died the following day. Here we were at the height of our obedience to "the Call" and tragedy strikes, twice. The cause, we now believe, was my lavish use of the wood preservative Dieldrin mixed with creosote to prevent the white ant termites from eating our house. Some of us still have traces of it in our systems, as have Australian colleagues who also used it.

With Robert's death, things changed both in ourselves in our understanding of the cost of mission, and in our Papuan colleagues and village folk. Now we were seen to be human and to suffer just like them. Now we too were vulnerable. We almost lost Stephen in 1970 with the sudden onset of cerebral malaria. Only the personal care of hospital staff and Peter Calvert's injections of quinine and prayer as we knelt around his bed, brought Stephen and us through. I even waved my fist under God's nose as I shouted in agony "Don't you dare!"

So to return and see Robert's grave and the gravestone I made out of cement and river sand was deeply moving, and very fulfilling. Its inscription still inspires - *Ekalesia Helaro, Toreisi Lou* – the hope of the Church is the Resurrection. Here was a seed we had planted that would bond us forever to that place, that church and those people – and the bond is very deep and rich, even now.

PNG's population has grown rapidly to 5.5 million people. The country is a democracy with 109 elected members of Parliament. Elections last year brought Sir Michael Somare, the first Prime Minister in 1977, back to power with a rather shaky coalition. Port Moresby, the capital city, has grown with the influx of people from all over the country, as well as refugees from Irian Jaya. A few days reorientation to the city let us visit favourite places and to discover the exciting variety of people, markets, churches and chaotic traffic. We were amazed that we didn't see another white face until a day after arriving!

With Airlines of Papua New Guinea we flew west to Baimuru in the Gulf Province in a Twin Otter plane. We were amazed at the size of everything - rivers, farmland, jungle and then the river deltas of the Gulf Province, which had been our home for five years. The local United Church congregation welcomed us with leis, cool drinks, delicious fruit and food and gifts, with a welcome note that told us the seed we had planted was bearing fruit. Quite moving! The dingy and outboard journey to Kapuna Hospital in the Purari River delta, which had been our home, set the memories flowing, re-ignited my amazement at the beauty of the rivers, dense bush, tropical birds and the relentless tides. In fact if I ever write a book about that era of our lives I plan to use the title The Tides Rule our Lives.

The welcomes were moving but the absence of so many past staff (life span is shorter than in New Zealand) and the splintering of the local church through a widespread revival in the 1980s saddened us. Small villages now have two, three or even four churches vying with one another. One Pentecostal pastor confided that the renewal has lost its kick and they don't know how to revive it. On the other hand, Kapuna Hospital has become a mission centre not only training nurses for medical work around the country, but running courses for Christian leaders, youth leaders and discipling believers. A new sense of unity is growing, with meetings for forgiveness of past hurts and splits.

Back in Port Moresby we visited our old home at Boroko United Church. The three congregations I worked with in the 1970s have now become independent of each other and are all thriving. One of them meets in a new church building nearby - the *Sione Kami Memorial Church* seats 2000 people and on the Sunday we attended there were 1200 present; quite an increase from the 80 or so when we began our ministry there in 1974!

By Andrew Dunn Spanz



# Moderator's Special Appeal

## Target: \$100,000 by GA08

\$250 per congregation or \$3 per member

You saw the marches for democracy last year. Myanmar is in crisis. Our friends need out help. This is one of the Global Mission Office's most successful appeals in recent times.

#### How can we do it?

- Zo Synod office equipment provided. Two chicken houses, five buffalo and two carts in operation.
- Tedim Worship Centre & Manse – construction has begun. Funds still required.
- Lairum Synod awaiting funding from us for water buffalo and chickens.
- Agape Clinic numerous urgent needs require our help.
- Theological students scholarships needed.

# Please continue to give generously.

# Young leaders challenged DU NEDAL TRIP

seed planted at General Assembly 2006 saw a group of young Presbyterians head to Nepal last December, where they built significant relationships and experienced the realities of a country that's only 1 percent Christian. Amanda Wells reports.

The trip was lead by Wairau Presbyterian Parish minister Ken Williams, who says taking our future leaders out of their comfort zones has a profound effect on them. "They're the people who will be leading our church in 20 years' time. The value of it can't be measured.

"It might be a cliche, but it was a life-changing experience for each of them."

Ken met Nepali guest Uttam at GA06 in Auckland when they shared transport arrangements each day. Because Ken had visited Nepal 20 years ago on his honeymoon, they had some interesting conversations and Uttam, who works for aid agency Hope for the Nations, suggested a return visit.

Ken talked to Global Mission Enabler Andrew Bell and there was a long exchange of emails with Nepal. The idea of taking a team of young people took shape, and Ken promoted this at last July's PYM Connect conference. The five young people who eventually went were: Richard Steer, Gareth Morrison, Hamish Mepham, Tom Mepham and Kathryn Grant.

Before the trip, they met for a weekend in Blenheim to discuss practicalities and talk about expectations and how the reality might differ.

All six team members paid for their flights and transport, though Andrew obtained a Council for World Mission grant that covered living expenses while in Nepal, funded a conference that Ken spoke at and enabled a donation to the work of Hope for the Nations.

During their trip, Ken spoke for three days at a conference of local church leaders. His topic was pastoral issues facing churches in relation to leadership and discipleship, with reference to Philippians. He says about 60 people attended, with nearly half being women; and none of the attendees had been to any form of conference or seminar before. The younger team members sat in on the conference for the first day, but on the second morning they were promised a tour of the village from someone who spoke English. Team member Kathryn Grant says they expected this to be relatively brief, but it ended up being a "wild adventure" that they returned from at 8pm. They went to a national park, tried to ride an elephant, travelled on the top of a jeep and met a pastor who had suffered a sword attack by Maoists.

The Kiwi group spent half its trip in Kathmandu, where Hope for the Nations runs three homes for children without parents. One houses children aged between four and 14, another teenagers and the third young adults; the homes collectively operate as a family, with regular meetings between the different age groups.

The team spent most of its time in the Godwari home, for the youngest age group. Fourteen children live there, with HFM hoping to increase numbers. The team spent time teaching the children language skills and playing with them. "They were just such neat kids," Ken says.

He says the trip gave them all a new perspective on being Christian outside a wealthy Western context. Less than 1 percent of Nepalese are Christians.

The poverty was eye-opening, Ken says. The group's interpreter was curious about the Kiwi way of life and said to Ken: "tell me about your house. Do you have hot water? Do you have a toilet inside? Are you able to send all your children to school?" When Ken had answered these questions, the interpreter said "you must be a very wealthy man".

The team spent a long time travelling on progressively deteriorating roads to reach a small village called Dari, where a new church had opened six days before their arrival. Ken preached at the church and held some teaching sessions, and they discovered that they were the first Europeans to have visited the village. "It was mindblowing," he says.

The team was struck by the graciousness of their hosts. "There's so much we can learn from them". Because the team did not wish to place an undue burden on their hosts, they liaised with Uttam to ensure they paid an amount that would cover costs. Involving a team of young people was hugely successful, with opportunities to further this kind of cross-cultural learning in the future for the mutual benefit, Ken says. "They were very keen for us to come back. They really want to work on developing relationships."

Kathryn, who's 21, heard about the trip at Connect and says it seems like an opportunity "to do something really interesting and worthwhile". She was an intern for Presbyterian Youth Ministry in 2005, which she says exposed her to a lot of new ideas. "You can get cloistered in your world at university." Kathryn has been living at Knox College, a hall of residence in Dunedin, and is studying medicine.

She says one surprise was the strength of Nepal's Christian community; another was the family atmosphere in the children's homes, which were far from the orphanage stereotype.

Kathryn says she expected to see poverty having a significant impact on people's health, but they did not see much disease or malnutrition. The trip gave new certainty to her choice of career, she says. "It's something that I might be able to offer in terms of practical help" whether in Nepal or elsewhere.

Tom Mepham says he felt a strong sense during Ken's talk at Connect that he should go on the trip, despite having no previous inclinations towards mission. "It just seemed to come out of nowhere."

Twenty-one year old Tom has just finished a computing degree in Dunedin. He's also a musician and earlier this year was doing some recording in Wellington, after which he was heading back to Dunedin where he teaches the drums part-time and is involved in youth work.

Tom says hanging out in the children's home was fantastic, with its opportunity to spend a lot of time with the children and develop relationships. "I felt like we were there with friends. The kids were amazing; so giving and generous and open.

"You could really see God moving in the people that we were with."

Tom says it's easy for young Kiwis to fall into the trap of thinking exclusively about the circles that they move in rather than engaging with the larger world and church. Mission trips provide benefits for both sides: "there's things that they need us for and things that we need them for."

"The challenge is keeping the friendship ongoing; to keep emails going and not just relegate it as an awesome trip."

Kathryn agrees: "One of the challenges coming back is 'how do I translate this experience into something long term for me and for them?" [Spanz]

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#### Ref A KiwiSaver scheme especially for Christians

Did you know that from 1 April 2008 employers will start contributing to their employee's KiwiSaver accounts? This means your KiwiSaver account can grow even faster.

The Koinonia Fund is here to help. It is aimed at people who work for a Christian organisation, serve their church, or who have made a commitment to Christian outreach.

The Koinonia Fund follows an **ethical investment policy** across the three pools offered.

If you haven't joined KiwiSaver or your current scheme just doesn't fit, contact us today.



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## PRESBYTERIAN SUPPORT NORTHERN

**Presbyterian Support Northern** strives to make positive and lasting differences across generations by proactively contributing to the achievement of safe and flourishing communities and a just society. We are seeking ways to extend our support to the community beyond service provision by having a voice on key issues such as family violence. The upcoming PSN hosted conference, "Keeping Kids Safe", is an example of this in action.

Keeping Kids Safe offers organisations and individuals concerned about children and families the opportunity to come together to see what we can do better to help children, families and communities deal with family violence and thrive. With high quality presenters from the community, government and research sectors, the conference promises to provide insights into what really works to keep our children safe from abuse and to help facilitate better connections and collaborations between community and government organisations that provide services to families.

The conference will examine best practice, new ideas, and will offer an opportunity to talk in

depth about the factors driving abuse and what we can do about them.

Key topics to be covered at the conference include:

- > Privacy and protection how do we respect the privacy legislation but keep kids safe?
- > Why does abuse keep coming back the dynamics of violence and abuse
- > Domestic violence what do we know, what do we need to do?
- > Early intervention, prevention, rehabilitation - where should the emphasis be?
- What do we know and what do we assume facts, data and anecdote around abuse
- > Working with migrant women and children
- Working with children with disabilities and their families around issues of abuse
- > Best practice around working with children, families and communities

The Keeping Kids Safe conference will take place on the 14 - 15 April 2008, at the TelstraClear Pacific Events Centre, Manukau City.







For more information or to register, please visit **www.keepkidssafe.co.nz.** 

## PRESBYTERIAN SUPPORT SOUTH CANTERBURY TURNS 90

**Presbyterian Support South Canterbury** will be celebrating its 90th anniversary in May 2008.

This is a celebration of the journey over those 90 years of supporting and helping people, young and old, throughout the South Canterbury region.

Presbyterian Support South Canterbury was formed in 1918 with the opening of a children's home. This was a home for orphaned children and was set up in the wake of the First World War and the influenza epidemic.

In 1948 Presbyterian Support South Canterbury's concern for the elderly in South Canterbury led to the opening of their first rest home. This was made possible by a substantial bequest from Miss Margaret Wilson. In 1963 the first cottages were built on the Margaret Wilson Rest Home site followed by the addition of the hospital wing in 1966.

The second rest home was the Lorna and Hamish Grant Eventide Home, known as the Croft, which opened in 1968.

The Wallingford Rest Home in Temuka was opened in 1984 with a major contribution from the local community.

In 1973 the Goodwill Shop to provide quality used clothing at a reasonable price was opened in the Timaru business centre. This shop remains open today and is operated by many volunteers from the South Canterbury parishes.

Presbyterian Support South Canterbury established a Child and Family Support service known as Family Care in 1989. This service is now branded under the Presbyterian Support Family Works banner and provides many support programmes and services for children and families within the South Canterbury region. Family Works has outgrown its current premises at the Croft Homestead and will be moving into a new site nearer the Timaru City centre in mid 2008.

Presbyterian Support South Canterbury provides choices and support for people to live their lives where they want to. One of the services to support community living is the day activity programme, which provides companionship and planned activities for older people living in the community.

In 2005 a new restorative service for people assessed as needing rest home level care but who want to stay living in their own home was developed. Community First now provides care



Michael Parker (CEO), Merle Maddren (Corporate Services Co-ordinator) and Mollie Thomson (Board Member) view historical photos of Presbyterian Support South Canterbury

and support for 30 clients.

Presbyterian Support South Canterbury will be here for many years to come making a positive difference for the South Canterbury community.

If you have had involvement with Presbyterian Support South Canterbury at some time over the past 90 years and you would like further information on the 90th anniversary please contact us.

PH: 03 688 1748 Email: admin@pssc.co.nz

WAY2GO is a Scripture Union initiative

Scriptureunion

Contact us if you would like a brochure: info@scriptureunion.org.nz or freephone us on 0508 423 836 MORE INFORMATION AND REGISTRATIONS You can register now online at our website: www.youradventurebegins.com

There will be over 20 practical workshops. Choose from children's ministry issues such as using construction to engage kids, story telling, multi-sensory worship and motivating volunteers.

WAY2GO 2008 includes inspirational worship and interactive plenary sessions exploring ways to connect with postmodern children.

Whether you're a new volunteer or an experienced children's worker, this conference wil have something for you. Come on your own or come as a team and enjoy it together.

scripture union

children's ministry conference 2008

Auckland 29 March 2008

Wellington I5 March 2008

Dunedin I2 April 2008

# Solomon Islands women confront the challenge of logging

"We don't want to change our lifestyle," says Ruth Liloqula. "We like the island lifestyle. All we want is a better standard of living - not to become rich but to have enough for the basics."

Ruth is from Choiseul in the Solomon Islands. Known locally as Lauru, the island is isolated and lacks basic services. Women are struggling to protect their land and culture while trying to clothe, feed, house and get medical care for their families. There are no sealed roads, few health clinics, and little paid employment. Schooling is prohibitively expensive. Transport is mainly by boat but as fuel costs rise, people must rely on paddle power - taking much longer to reach medical centres, schools and other facilities. Logging, however, is proving to be the biggest challenge.

For the women of Choiseul, logging is more than just the removal of trees. They rely on the forests for the necessities of life including food, medicinal plants for primary healthcare, income from string bag making, and housing materials. The land is part of their identity and a rich resource they want to pass on to future generations. Unsustainable logging by foreign companies is threatening it all.

There are no laws protecting the Solomons' forests, leaving each tribal group to decide whether their land can be logged. With few other options for cash income there is huge pressure on people to sell logging rights, often creating deep divisions within local communities. Those who have sold remain living in poverty. They receive only a small payment and then the trees have gone.

Logging is destroying the environment as foreign weeds that choke native plants take over, water supplies are contaminated, soil is eroded and other food sources are lost as increased flash flooding washes away shellfish beds.

Ruth is especially concerned about the leko tree. It grows in only two areas of Choiseul and its bark is used to produce a strong string that is then made into bags. "It lasts for a very, very long time and that's what is special about leko," explains Ruth. But the trees may become extinct and "our future children will not have the opportunity to use and to know about this very important tree here in Choiseul."

CWS partner the Lauru Land Conference (LCC) women's programme, of which Ruth is coordinator, is helping local women address these challenges. The programme brings women together in workshops to be trained in new skills and revive traditional handicrafts. Groups have recently taken up tie dying and screen-printing fabrics, clothing and linen using old x-rays for the stencils. The finished products are sold in the capital Honiara. By developing alternative income opportunities, the LCC hopes there will be less pressure and women will gain in confidence to argue against the sale of logging rights.

The craft workshops also provide an opportunity for women to share information, learn about environmental and political issues, and decide on strategies for change. Women are now speaking out in tribal councils and in some cases picketing the boundaries of their land to stop the encroachment of loggers. They are enthusiastic about the LCC women's programme. One trainer says, "I'm glad to say that the programme is important to them because it brings them together to support each other." Their main hope now is to save their forests. "I love the traditional way of life," says Ruth, "because we've got our peace of mind. When you're sad you can go to the forest and you can look at the trees and be happy." She is working to ensure her island can meet its own development needs without giving up its traditional culture.

You can learn more about the LLC Women's programme, its development approach and the challenge of logging in the CWS study series "Lauru Our Land: Solomon Islands women face the future" available on DVD or video with accompanying study material. Contact CWS: 0800 74 73 72 or cws@cws.org.nz



Ruth at Kelekele



Application guidelines are available from CWS PO Box 22652 Christchurch 8142 or www.cws.org.nz

Closing date: 30 April 2008